



*Bless the Lord
God of Israel
because he
has come to
help and has
delivered his
people.*



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

December 8, 2024

We welcome all who are visiting with us today.

It is good to have you in worship with us. Please introduce yourself to Pastor Phil this morning and let us know if there is any way we might be of service to you or your family.

Silent Reflection: "We are not at peace with others because we are not at peace with ourselves, and we are not at peace with ourselves because we are not at peace with God." ~ Thomas Merton

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELLS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: It is in the watching and in the waiting,

ALL: that we hear the promises made so long ago.

ONE: It is in the questions and in the hoping,

ALL: that we give thanks every time we hear the glad news.

ONE: It is in the coming and in the going,

ALL: that we welcome the One who is our delight and our joy!

* HYMN *Blessed Be the God of Israel*

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THE ADVENT WREATH – PEACE

Lighting the Candle

Advent Song

1. Light the advent candle, one: Now the waiting has begun;
We have started on our way, time to think of Christmas day.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
Candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.
2. Light the advent candle, two: Think of humble shepherds, who
filled with wonder at the sight of the child of Christmas night.
Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
Candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.

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CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Forgive us, Living God, that in the music in the stores and the jingles in the air, we do not hear the songs of the angles. Forgive us that in the hustle and bustle of every day, we do not see the child standing alone in tears, the family struggling for existence, or the outcast pushed further away from hope. Forgive us that in the advertisements over the airwaves and online, we do not find the peace, the hope, and all the gifts you offer to your children. Pour out your tender mercy and forgiveness upon us. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

GLORIA PATRI

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Prayer for the children (*unison*):

We send blessings upon our children for all God's love,
all Christ's friendship and all the caring of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Song Response

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us power,
send us grace.

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 1:3-11

Luke 1:68-79

Luke 3:1-6

HYMN *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry* 156

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SERMON

HYMN *like a child* 162

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INVITATION TO OFFERING

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly hosts; Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*unison*)

How good you have been to us, gracious God! How meagerly we have responded. You have restored our fortunes when we felt all was lost. You have filled our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy. We give thanks, not only with a portion of our income, but also through renewed commitment to righteous living. By your grace, we share in the work Christ came to accomplish among us. May love abound in and through us. Amen.

PRAYERS OF OUR CHURCH/SILENT PRAYERS/LORD'S PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE Into My Heart 485

Into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

Come in today, come in to stay, come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

* HYMN *Angels, From the Realms of Glory* 189

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

SERVING YOU TODAY

Council Person
Accompanist

Kevin Hollis
Melody Hollis

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

St. John's: Don Koenig, Christy Lanning, Fred Lanning, and Sean and Dustin, sons of Margie & Wally Foxworthy

St. Jacob: Carol Casperson, Marvin Docter, Lori Foley, Norma Logsdon, Jackie Miller, Kathleen Ritter, and the family of John Zweck

IL South Conference: Each week the churches of the Illinois South Conference are asked to pray for congregations and their pastors and other ministries of the UCC. This week we are asked to pray for:

Church & Pastors

- Belleville Concordia UCC - Rev. Joan (John) Mier

- Belleville St. Paul UCC - Rev. Michelle (Aaron Brent Coleman) Torigian

Retired Pastor

- Rev. Donald (Anne) Sabbert

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Roger Baer, Dec. 8

Dian & Ty Gansmann, 29 years, Dec. 8

Donna & John Lowe, 40 years, Dec. 8

Sam Frey, Dec. 9

Peggy Bohnenstiehl, Dec. 10

Barbara & Roger Baer, 42 years, Dec. 11

Bradley Goetter, Dec. 13

CHURCH ATTENDANCE, December 1, 2024

St. John's – 16 St. Jacob – 28

CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor's office hours: Tuesday through Thursday: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Secretary's office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

St. Jacob Phone: 618-644-2142 / St. Jacob E-mail: stjucc@hometel.com

Website: stjacobbucc.org

Pastor Phil Barbier: Phone: 314-312-2347 / E-mail: pastor@hometel.com

BLESSING BOX LOCATED AT ST. JACOB UCC

The "Blessing Box" (located on the east side of St. Jacob UCC) can use donations of non-perishable food, hygiene products, and other items for those in need. Anyone can donate -- items are anonymously given and received. Please consider blessing our neighbors in need, and if you are in need, please feel free to stop by.

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

With the inflation these past few months, use of local food pantries has been high, and donations have been low. To help our communities we have a donation tub/box for food pantry donations in the sanctuary at St. John's and St. Jacob.

Items for St. John's (For Lebanon Matthew 25:40 Ministries): Canned goods including: green beans, corns, carrots, mixed vegetables, stew, chili, soup, fruit, spaghetti sauce, diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, potatoes (boxed/bags), Rice a Roni, macaroni and cheese, pasta, Ramen noodles, Jello, pudding, peanut butter, jelly, cereal, oatmeal, powdered sugar, brown sugar, oil, Crisco, dish soap, laundry detergent (quart bottles/sheets/pods), dryer sheets, paper towels, toilet paper, baggies (sandwich/qt./gal.) plastic wrap, toilet bowl cleaner, and cleaning solution

Items for St. Jacob (Ministries Unlimited): Pop-tarts, oatmeal, cheese cracker sandwiches, beef jerky, fruit cups, Vienna sausages, ketchup, mustard, broth, cooked ham, pasta sauce, jelly, pancake mix, & syrup

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Come, Let Us Adore Him: Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2024 by Lisa Hancock used with permission.

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CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDNESDAY: Every Ladies Fellowship meets at 10 a.m.

DEC. 16: St. Jacob Council meeting, 7 p.m.

DEC. 17: St. John's Council meeting, 7:15 p.m.

DEC. 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE** services -- 4 p.m. and 10 p.m., St. Jacob

DEC. 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE** service -- 7 p.m., St. John's

DEC. 25: **CHRISTMAS** no worship service

DEC. 29: Christmas hymns (service), St. Johns, 8:45 a.m. & St. Jacob, 10:15 a.m.

RETURN OF SUNDAY SCHOOL AT ST. JACOB

After a hiatus, Sunday School will return in January and is open to all children kindergarten through 6th grade. Classes will be held before worship (9-10 a.m.) the 2nd & 4th Sundays from January through May. Additional details will be posted on the St. Jacob UCC Facebook page as they become available.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY AT ST. JACOB

A short, four-week adult Bible Study on the 10 Commandments will be offered every other Wednesday (Jan. 8 & 22, and Feb. 5 & 19). Each session will offer two options to attend, beginning at either 10 a.m. or 7 p.m. For more information call the office at 618-644-2142.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

This year's Lenten Bible Study will be held each Wednesday, March 5 - April 9 at 7 p.m., and we'll be using the book *Lent in Plain Sight: A Devotion through Ten Objects* by Jill Duffield. If you are interested in joining us for the study, let Pastor Phil know by Jan. 18th so we can order enough books.



SNOW SHOVELING

Winter weather is here. Please volunteer to shovel the church sidewalks. There is a sign-up sheet on the table in the Narthex. Thank you!

***** THE UPPER ROOM** (Jan-Feb) magazines are available on the table in the Narthex at St. Jacob.

FIRST LESSON: Philippians 1:3-11

I thank my God every time I mention you in my prayers. I'm thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it's always a prayer full of joy. I'm glad because of the way you have been my partners in the ministry of the gospel from the time you first believed it until now. I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus. I have good reason to think this way about all of you because I keep you in my heart. You are all my partners in God's grace, both during my time in prison and in the defense and support of the gospel. God is my witness that I feel affection for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

This is my prayer: that your love might become even more and more rich with knowledge and all kinds of insight. I pray this so that you will be able to decide what really matters and so you will be sincere and blameless on the day of Christ. I pray that you will then be filled with the fruit of righteousness, which comes from Jesus Christ, in order to give glory and praise to God.

SECOND LESSON: Luke 1:68-79

"Bless the Lord God of Israel because he has come to help and has delivered his people. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in his servant David's house, just as he said through the mouths of his holy prophets long ago. He has brought salvation from our enemies and from the power of all those who hate us. He has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and remembered his holy covenant, the solemn pledge he made to our ancestor Abraham. He has granted that we would be rescued from the power of our enemies so that we could serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness in God's eyes, for as long as we live. You, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way. You will tell his people how to be saved through the forgiveness of their sins. Because of our God's deep compassion, the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to give light to those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide us on the path of peace."

GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the rule of the emperor Tiberius—when Pontius Pilate was governor over Judea and Herod was ruler over Galilee, his brother Philip was ruler over Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruler over Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—God's word came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. John went throughout the region of the Jordan River, calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. This is just as it was written in the scroll of the words of Isaiah the prophet,

A voice crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight.

Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be leveled.

The crooked will be made straight and the rough places made smooth.

All humanity will see God's salvation."